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UNCLAS MAPUTO 001624

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/S - HTRERGER, OES/ETC - HLEE, EB/TPP/ABT -
RSINGH

USDA FOR FAS/BIG - JPPASSINO

USDOC FOR RTELCHIN

PRETORIA FOR AG ATTACHE - SREYNOLDS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [MZ](#)

SUBJECT: MOZAMBIQUE: UPDATE ON BIOSAFETY DEVELOPMENTS

REF: A. STATE 259661

[1](#)B. MAPUTO 01174

[1](#)1. On December 13 emboff and econ/commercial assistant met with Calisto Bias, Director of Plant Development, National Institute of Agronomic Investigation (INIA) to learn about Mozambique's recent biosafety developments. INIA is a key participant in an inter-ministerial commission that addresses biosafety concerns and formulates legislation regarding the protection of biodiversity. Biosafety regulations have been drafted, which are expected to be approved in mid-late 2005, according to Bias. He was reluctant to disclose specific information, but emphasized that the new rules would, in contrast to the total ban currently in effect, allow for the import of some living modified organisms (LMOs) and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). (Note: At present the distribution within Mozambique of LMOs and GMOs is not permitted. Import of LMO food aid is allowed for transit to neighboring countries or, in the case of wheat, provided that it is milled prior to being distributed locally.) Bias added that biosafety legislation is being developed in accordance with the spirit of the Cartagena Protocol.

[1](#)2. In January 2005 commission members will participate in a closed seminar on the harmonization of biosafety regulations among Lusophone countries. In May the Ministry of Agriculture will send someone to the Second Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Several INIA representatives will also attend.

[1](#)3. Comment: Mozambique currently has very little agricultural trade with the US. Rather than closing the door tighter, the GRM is now in the process of easing the entry of certain LMO and GMO products. One factor in the GRM's acceptance of GMOs is its interest in using GMO cotton seeds to improve local cotton production. Mozambique welcomes Title I - Food for Progress commodity donations. If a Title I program is granted to Mozambique in 2005, we expect no GMO-related conflicts (Ref B).

LA LIME